

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

APRIL 2002

TWO DOLLARS





Director's Column

William L. Woodfin, Jr



It is with tremendous sadness that I share with you the recent loss of David Horne, one of Virginia's true outdoorsmen and premier humanitarians. Many of you are likely familiar with David's leadership work with Virginia Hunters Who Care, Inc. (Hunters for the Hungry). Unfortunately, David passed away on February 14 after a number of months battling cancer. Shortly after learning about David's death, I was approached by Denny Quaiff, Executive Director of the Virginia Deer Hunters Association. He asked if, on behalf of all those who knew David and supported his hard work, he could write a few words in memory of his friend. David Horne was truly a friend to Virginia's wildlife resources.

Tribute to a Man Who Cared

by Denny Quaiff

During the summer of 1991 I met David Horne. David had called and asked if he could sit down and talk with me about a program that was called Hunters For The Hungry. This program was being set up to provide venison to the needy citizens of our great Commonwealth. As president of the Virginia Deer Hunters Association at the time, I was anxious to learn more. This sounded like an excellent way for the hunters to put something back into the community and show the non-hunting public that hunters are truly a caring group.

I remember our conversation very well. While sitting at the kitchen table in my home, David explained that he was

using an idea that had started in Texas. The Texas program had done a total of 7500 pounds the first year and David had set our goal at 15,000. David said, "Virginians are proud people and I figure that our deer hunters can do twice as much as anything Texas can do." He was right. By the middle of the first week of gun season we had met our goal...so David increased the first year goal to 30,000 pounds and by the end of the deer season over 33,000 pounds of venison was available for distribution to soup kitchens and food banks throughout the state. The Hunters for the Hungry program had made its mark.

In 1992, David continued getting the word out, adding a few more meat processors, and increasing the venison donated to 68,000 pounds. The program was growing by leaps and bounds with a total of over 100,000 pounds of meat processed and distributed after only two years of operation.

Sharon Cash, director of Lynchburg Area Food Bank said, "The program, which David founded, provides high protein and nutritious red meat to our agencies to help feed the hungry in our community. It is my prayer that everyone will continue to support the Hunters for the Hungry program."

The 2001/2002 hunting season set an-

other record for Hunters for the Hungry with 233,499 pounds of venison distributed to needy Virginians. Since 1991, when the program was started, this non-profit organization has provided a total of 1,400,688 pounds of venison equaling 5.6 million portions donated by hunters from all corners of the Old Dominion. Under David's leadership the Virginia Hunters for the Hungry program has grown to be one the largest of its kind in the country today.

In October of this past year, David received the Tom Jenkins Service Award from the Virginia Deer Hunters Association (the organization's highest award for service). David's work for mankind throughout the state has touched many lives and created a high standard for others to follow. David passed away on February 14, 2002, after a courageous battle with cancer. All of us who were fortunate enough to have known David will always be indebted to him for his dedication and untiring sacrifices.

To carry on David's work, the David H. Horne Memorial Fund to provide for hungry Virginians has been established through the Hunters for the Hungry program. Tax deductible donations to the charity can be mailed to Hunters for the Hungry, P. O. Box 304, Big Island, VA. 24526.



David Horne, who was an avid bow hunter, is pictured here with a Bedford County, Pope and Young whitetail that he harvested during the 1995 archery season. David donated the venison to Hunters for the Hungry for processing and distributing to needy Virginians.

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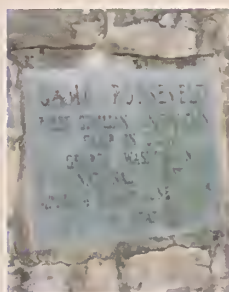
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VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

Cover: The American bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), once a rare sight in Virginia, is now seen throughout much of the state.
Photo ©Joe McDonald

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VOLUME 63

NUMBER 4

A Spring Gobblin'

Don't let
a little rain
dampen
your next
hunting
adventure.

by Gerald Almy

When the alarm clocks rang it was tempting to roll over and catch an extra hour's sleep, to forget about them. I had been out several mornings trying to find a "revved-up" turkey that wanted to come to my calls, but had little to show for my efforts except a groggy disposition. Twice I'd heard a couple of feeble gobbles on a distant ridge, the other times total silence except the soft, muted sound of geese honking in the distance.

Weather was partly to blame. It had been miserable, cold, and windy with battleship-gray skies nearly every morning. Where were those still, warm sunny days that get toms talking?

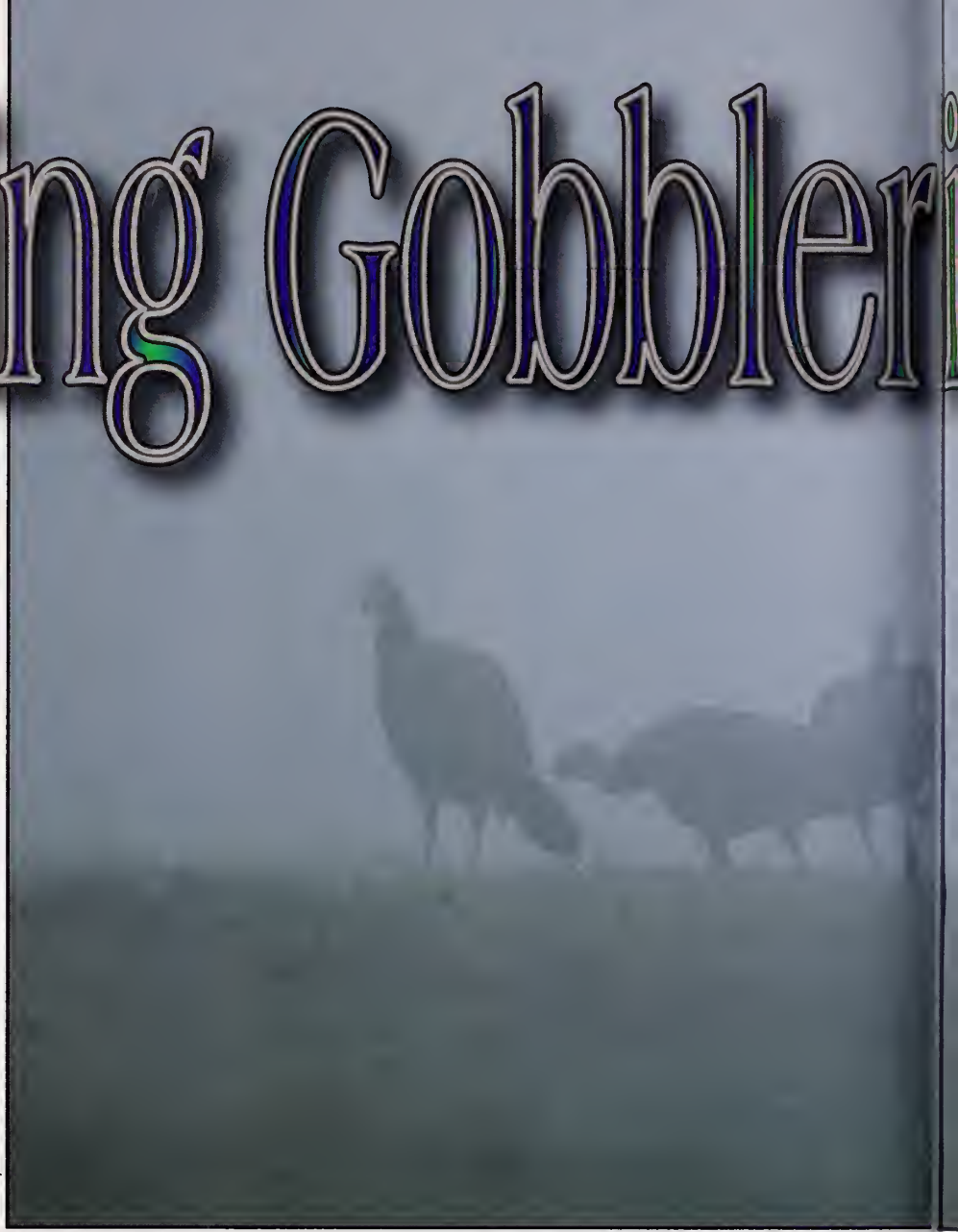
There was another reason to think about sleeping in today. It was starting to rain; thunder grumbled across the ridge. Something gave me the push to get out of bed, though, in spite of the nasty weather. As I headed out in full camo, 12 gauge double in hand, the rain grew harder and flashes of silver lightning sliced through the black, night sky, like jagged knife blades. The low sound of the thunder seemed to shake the ground.

Not an auspicious start. Thinking it would be just a quick shower, I didn't wear foul weather gear. Water dripped icily down my neck. Aware of the dangers of lightning, I toyed seriously with heading back to the

log cabin, but the flashes of electricity lighting up the predawn seemed well to the east. Timing the number of seconds between the rumble of thunder and the lightning bolts, I realized the major electrical storm was miles away.

How could I quit now? The gobbles from a bird just a short way up the ridge were resonating down the hollow loud and strong as he answered the thunder. As I eased closer in the gray half-light of predawn, the bird sounded off raucously, double gobbling at times to the loud bangs from the sky. A second tom called farther up the hillside with a higher-pitched voice. Then the big boy roared again.

©Scotty Lovett



in the Rain

When I approached as close as I dared, I stuck a Feather Flex hen decoy on a stake, backed off 20 yards, and set up against a wide-girthed maple. Daylight came slowly, slinking in dim and gray from the cloud cover and the rain that continued to pour down. But, with two gobblers sounding off 125 yards away, I barely noticed that I was getting drenched.

Lightning continued to strike, but fortunately it stayed a safe distance away. Unless it started coming closer, I vowed to stick it out a while longer. I didn't think I'd get good sounds in the wet conditions with friction calls, but set a push-pin beside me upside down to keep the



Modern-day camouflage clothing and waterproof materials, like GORE-TEX, help hunters to conceal themselves and keep dry, even in the worst weather. With quick changing spring temperatures, hunters will tell you that one of the real pleasures of pursuing turkeys during this time of the year is being in the woods and forests as they come alive with color and the sounds of wildlife.



©Gerald Almy

Damp weather will often change the effectiveness of many of the hand-held turkey calls, so it's always a good idea to carry a mouth or diaphragm call.

rain out and slipped a diaphragm in my mouth. Tree yelping softly produced a loud response from the tom. Thunder wasn't the only thing he would answer.

I waited until he'd gobbled several more times on his own, then called again. The tom bellowed back. I purred softly with the push-pin.

Suddenly the woods grew silent. I heard the whoosh of wings from several turkeys flying down off the roost. Minutes later, when it was still barely light enough to see, the first bird eased over a small knoll and began pecking at the ground, slowly working my way.

The turkey looked small in the dim light and rain with its feathers matted down and wet. I assumed it was a hen from the drab colors and size. Then another bird appeared, and another. Four turkeys were pecking through the woods and slowly coming towards my calls and the decoy. A slightly larger bird stepped over the knoll and I could see a touch of red in the head. The jake.

Finally, taking up the rear came a turkey that dwarfed all the others in size. I knew it was him. As the birds slowly worked in a scattered group towards the calls, the large one puffed himself out in half-strut. It was clear this was the boss gobbler that had been doing the bulk of the calling to both the thunder and me.

The hens worked closer. Now they were within sight of the decoy, some looking at it curiously between pecks, others not paying any attention to it. The tom was trailing the rear, coming closer every minute. The hens were perhaps 18 yards away now, the biggest tom maybe 25. Making a slight adjustment an inch or so with my double barrel, I centered the orange bead on the bird's head and neck and fired.

The heavy gobbler went down cleanly as the other turkeys putted and scattered up the mountainside. I didn't move for a second, waiting to see if a second shot was required. It wasn't. Soaking in the rainy, early-morning scene as thunder continued to rumble in the distance, I gathered up my prize and admired the bird's wet, beautiful plumage and thick 10-inch beard.

Later that morning I checked it in at Baker's Store where it tipped the scales dead center at 20 pounds. The bad weather spell hadn't broken, but the roar of thunder had brought success. □

Gerald Almy is a nationally renowned outdoor writer and a field editor for Sports Afield magazine.



©Gerald Almy

The Tree



Camp Roosevelt
RECREATION AREA

GEORGE WASHINGTON
National Forest



Army



"I propose to create a Civilian Conservation Corps to be used in simple work... more important, however, than the material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work."

Franklin D. Roosevelt,
March 9, 1933

story by
King Montgomery

On April 17, 1933, only 37 days after President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office, the first Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) boy was inducted at Camp Roosevelt near Edinburg in the Shenandoah Valley. Camp Roosevelt was also the first of over 4,500 camps housing 500,000 young men across the nation. The "Boys of Roosevelt" at the camp would build roads, trails, and construct the recreation areas at Elizabeth Furnace, New Market Gap, and Little Fort. Woodstock Tower, with its fabulous view of the famous Seven Bends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River, was constructed by the CCC and the citizens of Woodstock.

With an average of 63 camps in Virginia, the CCC would go on to build much more in the Old Dominion and across the country. Perhaps more important than building, the CCC planted millions of trees and other types of vegetation to reforest the land and control erosion resulting from clear-cut logging and mining damage. They also stocked mil-

most 13 million Americans, were jobless. The suffering, hunger, and radical adverse effects of that dark time defined the fiscal paths of generations to come. Particularly hard hit were the young men in the 18-25 age group.

One such young man was Henry Rich, destined to become the first to be inducted into the CCC. Out of



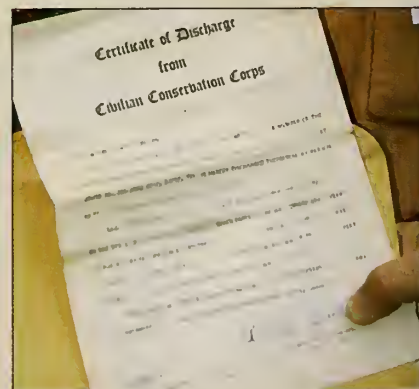
©King Montgomery

lions of fish in damaged streams and rivers, and generally improved wildlife habitat wherever they went. Roosevelt's Tree Army would provide the manpower to form the Shenandoah National Park and other parks and recreation areas in Virginia and throughout the United States.

The Great Depression

Sometimes good emerges from the chaos and pain of something bad, such as the situation we face today as we wage war against terrorists around the world. Back in the early 1930s, our nation was faced with a horrible economic depression; 25 percent of the work force, al-

Above and below: Many of the old photos of camp life in the Civilian Conservation Corps in Virginia and paperwork, like this Certificate of Discharge, were shared this past fall at the National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni reunion at Camp Roosevelt and the Shenandoah National Park.



©King Montgomery

work and out of hope in 1933, Rich would later recall: "The camp was a turning point in my life. I had been wandering aimlessly around the streets of Washington and was going downhill. The camp saved me and the majority of boys who were part of the 'depression days' camp program." Rich would go on to marry a young woman from Edin-

burg, attend college, and become a successful engineer. reunions at Camp Roosevelt, which are still held the second Sunday in September. They were also actively involved in the quest to make Camp Roosevelt a recreation area in the George Washington National Forest.

In 1966, after almost 24 years of abandonment, Camp Roosevelt was opened as a Recreation Area with 15

was struggling to maintain its parks and monuments. Forests were diseased and suffered from greedy logging practices, soil was depleted and badly eroded, streams and fish suffered, and the danger of forest and brush fires was pervasive. Enter the CCC, who would provide the means and men to help heal the land, forests, and waters so long abused and neglected. Their accomplishments are indeed impressive. Some include:

- Restored almost 4,000 historical structures.
- Developed 800 state parks in every state including Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Arrested soil erosion on more than 20 million acres. They stocked over one billion fish and built 4,622 fish-rearing ponds.
- Built almost 47,000 bridges and installed 5,000 miles of water supply.



©King Montgomery

burg, attend college, and become a successful engineer.

Another enrollee, Moon Mullins, came to Camp Roosevelt in 1934. After arriving at night with other new CCC members at the Edinburg train station, the young men were rounded up and driven the nine or so miles to Camp Roosevelt. Mullen recounts: "We came over the mountain in a covered truck. We couldn't see; we didn't know where we were going. It was a lonesome sight to be called home, but the longer I stayed the better I liked it."

After his tenure with CCC at Camp Roosevelt, Mullins settled in Edinburg with his wife, Pearl, and worked in a textile mill. Moon and Pearl were instrumental in beginning and maintaining annual CCC

picnic sites, 10 camping units, and two public restrooms. Foundations of some of the old CCC buildings, built by the boys of the depression, remain. When you visit here, you walk in the footsteps of the thousands of CCC young men who worked on and passed through these verdant hills.

The Tree Army

Even before the depression, the relatively new National Park Service



Upper Left: Fred Helsley (left) and Mr. Ottey Shelton chat with a U.S. Forest Service ranger. Fred joined the CCC in October 1933, served at Camp Roosevelt, and was discharged in September 1937; Ottey served from 1933-1935. Above: Virginia operated an average of 63 camps a year during 1933-1942, creating thousands of jobs for young men across the country. Photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service.

- Improved 3,462 beaches, transplanted 45 million trees and shrubs, and planted over 3 billion trees where forests were logged or burnt off.
- Developed and improved habitat on 7,000 miles of streams, built 28,087 miles of foot and horse trails, and 8,304 foot and horse bridges.
- Built 32,149 wildlife shelters,

Locust Shade Pond is part of the Urban Fishing Program and is stocked with trout by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), from November through April, and with channel catfish during the warmer months. The legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps lives on today in the Old Dominion and across the country.

eight grades of school in 10 to 11 years. About 110,000 CCC enrollees became literate while in service. Almost 60 percent were from rural areas (farms and towns of less than 2,500). Between 60 and 70 percent had no regular job at any time before joining. The average enrolled had three to four dependents (often parents and siblings), and he allotted



1,865 drinking fountains, and 202 lodges and museums.

From Camp Roosevelt and other Virginia camps, the CCC built our first six state parks, and helped develop such historic areas as Williamsburg, Jamestown, Yorktown, Fredericksburg, and Spotsylvania. Prince William Forest Park, in Prince William County, was built by the CCC on over-farmed and depleted land. Thanks to the CCC, the park, now part of the National Parks system, has numerous trails, roads, stone walls, amphitheaters, rustic cabins, and a large concrete dam that formed a small artificial lake. Today,

Upper Left: During a recent reunion of CCC members the colors were presented at a CCC luncheon by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Chapter 2447. Above: Between 1933 and 1942 nearly 200,000 African Americans served in the CCC.

Left: Much of the important work done by CCC members back in the 30's is still evident in Virginia and around the United States. Photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service.

Who They Were

A 1942 CCC report provided the following information on the average enrollee. He was about 18 years old, weighed between 130–140 pounds, and would gain 12–30 pounds during his tenure, which averaged 9 months. Most completed

\$22 of his \$30 monthly pay to those dependents.

Native Americans and African-Americans were allowed to join the CCC, and between 200,000–300,000 black men served in the Corps, mostly in segregated camps. Little is known about the Native American contingent. For more information on blacks in the CCC, see the com-

prehensive study "The African-American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps," by Professor Olen Cole, Jr., Ph.D., 1999, University Press of Florida.

Not much is known about women in the CCC. A brief article in *Happy Days*, the official newspaper of the CCC, had the following tidbits in the August 12, 1933, issue titled

"All 'Girl' CCC Camps Were Personal Project of President Roosevelt's Wife, Eleanor." The camps apparently concentrated on teaching and practicing sewing, typing, bookkeeping, dancing, and drama. The ladies were paid \$20 a month (men received \$30), and the cost of their rations was deducted from that amount.

The Legacy Continues

On September 27, 2001, on National Public Lands Day, I had the distinct pleasure of visiting Camp Roosevelt for the first day of a three-day reunion of CCC alumni, sponsored by the CCC Alumni Association. This reunion was the last sponsored by that organization, and the torch of the CCC was passed to the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF), the sponsor of National Public Lands Day nationwide. The NEETF will ensure the exemplary legacy of the CCC continues.

Lunchtime speakers addressed the CCC alumni and family members in a huge tent on the site of the old Camp Roosevelt mess hall. Lee District Ranger, Jim Smalls, welcomed the assemblage and was the first to sing the praises of the CCC; James Garner, Virginia State Forester, highlighted some of the lasting influences of the CCC in the Old Dominion. Associate Chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture



Upper Left: A monument to the first CCC camp in the U.S. Left: The foundation of the original officers' quarters still survives. Below: The old, wood dining hall at Camp Roosevelt is gone, but the original dinner bell still survives.





©King Montgomery



James R. Wilkins, Jr., the first Superintendent of Camp Roosevelt. Photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service.

Forest Service, Sally Collins, fondly recounted her girlhood experiences traveling around the country in a Ford station wagon visiting places where the CCC had built sites, including water fountains, picnic and restroom facilities, and cleared the trails through the woods and over

the land. Joan Sharpe, President of the Camp Roosevelt CCC Legacy Foundation, said she wanted everyone to remember the heritage of Camp Roosevelt, and she would work to pass along that legacy to future Americans.

The Lee Ranger District of the Washington National Forest is working in partnership with the family of James R. Wilkins, Jr., the first Superintendent of Camp Roosevelt, the Camp Roosevelt CCC Legacy Foundation, state natural resources agencies, including the Virginia Forestry Department and VDGIF, and local organizations to construct and maintain an interpretive center in Edinburg that will highlight the CCC and Camp Roosevelt.

I was very impressed with the speakers' praise for the CCC and its numerous achievements, many of which endure today. I was even more impressed by the youthful enthusiasm of the CCC alumni, who spoke of their days long ago in the "Tree Army" with a smile on their

lips, obvious pride in their hearts, and a twinkle in their eyes. □

King Montgomery is a frequent contributor to Virginia Wildlife. He lives in Burke.

Civilian Conservation Corps Information

George Washington & Jefferson
National Forest, Roanoke
(540) 265-5100

Lee Ranger District
George Washington National
Forest, Edinburg
(540) 984-4101

The Civilian Conservation Corps
Alumni Association
St. Louis, Mo.
(314) 487-8666
www.cccalumni.org/

Camp Roosevelt CCC Legacy
Foundation, Edinburg
Joan Sharpe, President
(540) 984-8735.

Wild in the woods

FIRE! A Fair Weather Friend

by Carol A. Heiser
illustrations by Spike Knuth



Forest Fire! The image conjures up great orange and amber flames crackling around the trunks of trees, shooting up high into the leaves and exploding into giant torches in the canopy. But not all fire is bad, nor is it always severely destructive. Historically, fire has been used by humans for thousands of years as a way of steering the course of nature to serve specific needs. Perhaps the most ancient fire tradition by Native Americans was fire for hunting. In the east, Native Americans burned large openings in forests, and in the Midwest they maintained the open prairies, because they knew that fire would facilitate succulent new growth which would then attract game animals that they could harvest for food. They set fires to chase game, to improve grazing or the growth of understory woodland plants like berries, and to open up brushy areas for easy access and travel. Early settlers in New England became accustomed to a haze of smoke in the woods each autumn, giving rise to the term "Indian summer." Today, land managers recognize the invaluable role that fire plays in structuring vegetation, and controlled fire is key to forest and wildlife management.

Ecological Benefits

Plant and animal communities are in a constant state of flux, a perpetual cascade of life, death, and complex interrelationships. Fire that results from natural causes is a vital part of healthy ecosystems, because it is an instrument of change that drives these natural processes. Fire helps turn the clock of succession back by wiping the canvas clean and starting with a new slate of plants. Here in the Southeast, this means that areas which experience frequent fire are maintained as open, grassy meadows, while areas with little fire gradually become forest.

Wildlife and forests derive many important benefits from the effects of fire. Fire removes dead trees and litter from the forest floor and creates openings that allow sunlight to reach areas that were previously shaded. Within a few seasons after a fire, one typically sees a flush of green, healthy regrowth, that in turn, provides food and cover for wildlife species which require those conditions. Fire unlocks nutrients like phosphorous and carbon that are held in plant tissue and recycles them as ashes back into the soil; the nutrients supply an improved growing medium for renewed plant growth.

The openings created by fire are also important to wildlife because the openings create more edge. An edge is the interface or place where two or more different habitats come together, such as where a forest meets a meadow or where a shrubby field meets a low-lying wetland. Wherever an edge occurs, you will find an overlap of one plant community with another, with a greater variety of food types available and, therefore, a greater diversity of wildlife species. This phenomena is referred to as the *edge effect*, and openings created by natural fire afford new habitat and additional places for wildlife to feed and travel. Some wildlife species, like the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, depend on fire to maintain open pine stands. Because fire is an agent of change that creates or enhances habitat and improves food availability, wildlife species reap many benefits after fire.

Fruit and seed production of flowering plants also increases after a burn. Fire provides a mechanism for breaking the seed coat of many native grasses and legumes, which in turn helps to stimulate germination and successful growth. Other plant species, such as the longleaf pine in southeastern Virginia, are specially adapted to resist the effects of fire and require fire to eliminate competition with other hardwood species. The cones of table mountain pine, a species which grows in high elevations, require fire's heat to break them open and release their seeds.

Is All Fire Bad?

Generations of schoolchildren fondly remember Smokey Bear, that familiar icon of American forests known for his simple message, "Only YOU can prevent forest fires!" Smokey did such a good job of teaching about the negative effects of fire, that much of the public has unfortunately been left with the indelible but false impression that all fires must be bad. In fact, there are actually two types of forest fire, and Smokey's message is meant to focus on the destructive type, a hot *wildfire* that can threaten human life and property. The other type, called a *prescribed fire*, is carefully orchestrated to burn at a much lower intensity and is recognized as a valuable land management tool.

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Fire is essential for maintaining open stands of forests, which improves habitat and food availability for many animals and birds, like the (previous page) Eastern cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) and the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*).

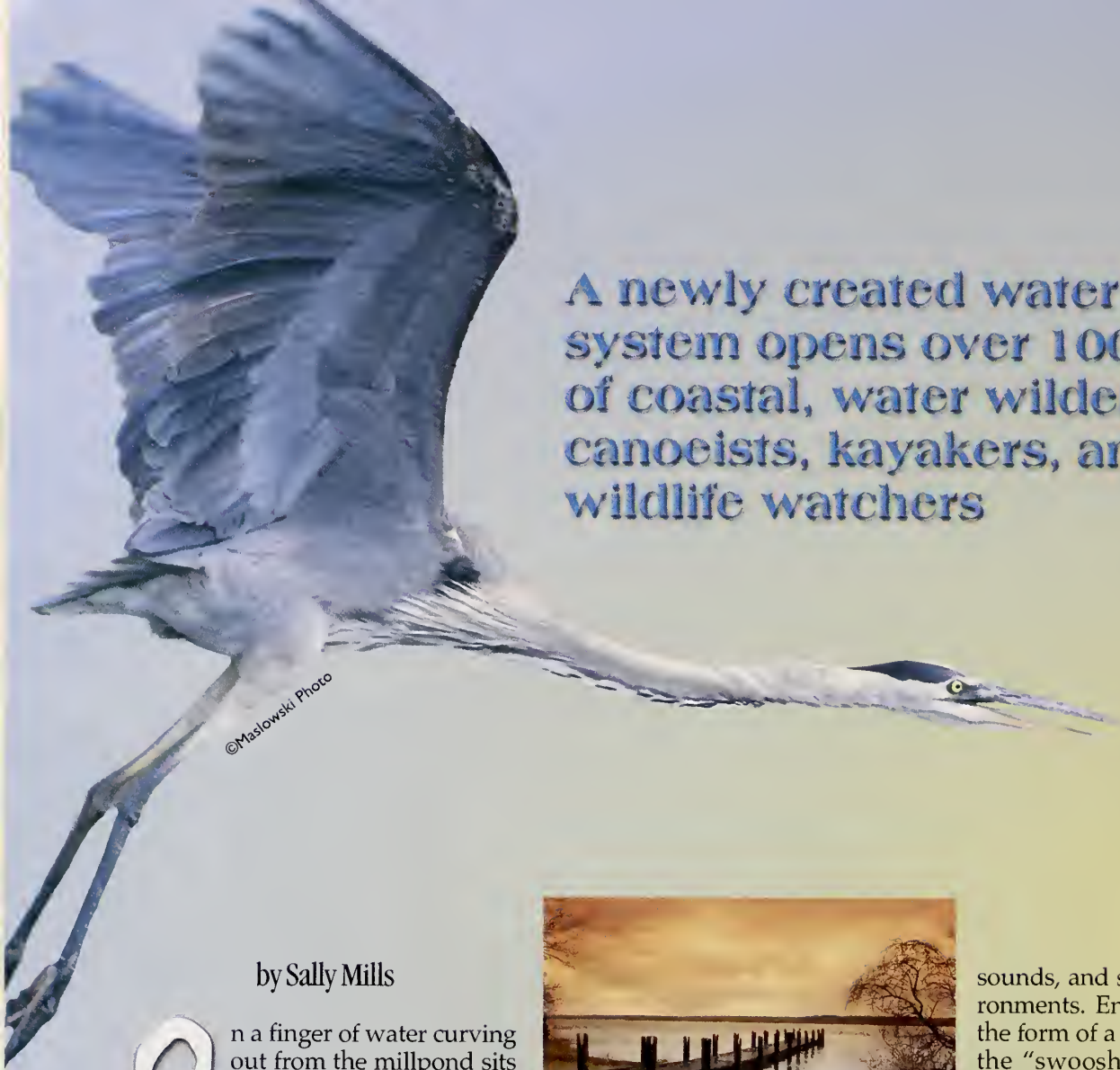


An aerial photograph of a river landscape. A long dam or bridge structure crosses the river, with water flowing through its spillways. The surrounding area is lush with green trees and fields. Some buildings and a road are visible in the lower right. The title 'The Algonquin Trace' is overlaid in large, blue, 3D-style letters.

The Algonquin Trace

A York River Water Trail:

Upon the Mattaponi,
Pamunkey, and York Rivers



A newly created water trail system opens over 100 miles of coastal, water wilderness to canoeists, kayakers, and wildlife watchers

by Sally Mills

On a finger of water curving out from the millpond sits a heron roost—strategically positioned to capture a full view of the main channel to the Walkerton Bridge. Turtles, snowy egrets, and baby geese also take up residence here. No doubt they rely upon the great blues to sound off during neighborhood patrols. It's a narrow creek rarely used by powerboaters afraid of getting hung up on the downed trees barely visible at high tide. These limitations make it all the more inviting to canoeists and kayakers, craving the solitude of less traveled reaches.

Paddlers are no longer a small minority in their quest for intimate encounters with this watery world at their waist. In fact, they represent a growing wave of people seeking a different kind of water-based recreation—one grounded in quiet reflection, made possible by the sights,



©Dwight Dyke



©Dwight Dyke

VDGIF public boat landings on the Mataponi, Pamunkey, and York Rivers provided the spine for the water trail's 100-plus mile length. Opposite page: Freshwater marshes like this one on the middle Pamunkey River lure fishermen and paddlers to share an afternoon with egrets and ospreys.

sounds, and smells of aquatic environments. Entertainment comes in the form of a kingfisher sighting, or the "swoosh" of a painted turtle lunging from a log, or an unexpected blush of fire engine red, courtesy of a cardinal flower in bloom around the next bend.

Fortunately, such surprises are still plentiful on the creeks of tide-water Virginia. In the watershed south of Virginia Beach, in the salt-water marshes of Mathews County, past historic homes on the mighty Potomac, and on the rivers and creeks of the York River system, a network of backwater sites friendly to people-powered craft and small motorboats is being stitched together to showcase the beauty of our coastal reaches. The concept converges neatly with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' (VDGIF) *Virginia Coastal Birding Trail* and the larger, regional trail system evolving in the mid-Atlantic, called the *Chesapeake Bay Gateways*

Network initiative. Ultimately, both will connect with land-based "Celebration 2007" attractions commemorating the founding of Jamestown.

Water Trails Defined

Simply put, a water trail is much like a land-based trail and often the two connect to join opportunities for paddling, hiking, and biking. A water trail can be a flowing river, a marsh network, or a coastal embayment. Throughout much of the Coastal Plain, water trail use involves an added element of risk associated with tides. Uniform guidance on small craft handling, boating safety, and weather information is, therefore, all the more important and should be provided at critical intervals along the trail to encourage good judgment.

Interpretive exhibits and information that help orient river travelers to their place in the overall geography of the watershed are other elements common to water trails. Nat-

ural features conveyed in maps or photographs might be displayed on signs along the riverbank or under cover of a kiosk that also offers shelter and safety to a weary traveler. Raising awareness of one's immediate surroundings—especially along the edges of sensitive areas—is also fundamental to appropriate trail use.

On the York River

Across its watershed, the York River Water Trail represents a modern trail initiative that's been brewing for the past two years through a community-based effort led by the Mattaponi & Pamunkey Rivers Association. According to director Billy Mills, "The inspiration for the trail comes from a number of sources and is based upon successful, established trails in the Pacific Northwest and the coastal islands of Maine." The project is timely, too, as the National Park Service engages in the

Gateways and Water Trails initiative—an opportunity to celebrate river resources with visitors to the Commonwealth during the upcoming "Celebration 2007." The 400th anniversary celebration presents an exciting challenge to engage families and friends in natural settings that more closely reveal the Jamestown story.

In keeping with such history-telling opportunities, Mills views the York River trail as a unique venue for sharing the long-neglected story of the culture and lore of Virginia's indigenous tribes—the first Virginians—at the time of their initial en-



counters with English settlers in the early 1600s. For this reason, the trail is also referred to as the "Algonquin Trace."

Seed funds for the Algonquin Trace were provided by Virginia's Department of Conservation & Recreation through grants to the Mattaponi & Pamunkey Rivers Association. The Association has stewarded the York's two headwater tidal tributaries since 1991.

"Providing an enhanced recreational and educational experience along our waterways helps foster an appreciation for them among citizens," notes former director David G. Brickley. "And nothing helps

build a sense of stewardship for the bay and its tributaries like experiencing them first-hand."

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries played a pivotal role in helping to deploy this trail by establishing a Memorandum of Agreement with the river association in support of its long-term commitment. According to director Bill Woodfin, "The Department is certainly pleased with this trail initiative and the opportunity to accommodate small boat operators. The Mattaponi and Pamunkey rivers are among the most cherished in the state, and should be enjoyed by all recreational users alike."



©Dwight Dyke

River shanties and aging docks speak to a time gone by, when the rivers were the principal highways of trade and commerce.

Photo ©Dwight Dyke.

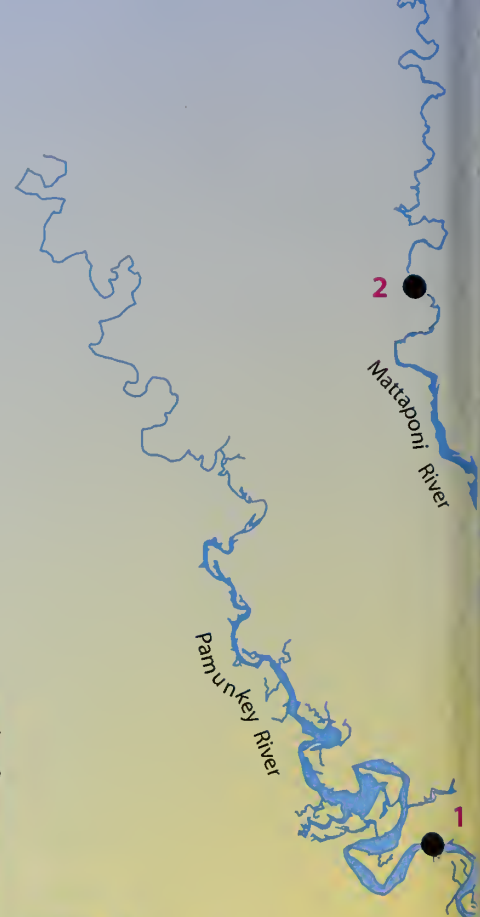
Outfitters:

- ◆ Mattaponi Canoe & Kayak, www.mattaponi.com, 800-769-3545
- ◆ Bay Trails Outfitters, www.baytrails.com, 804-725-0626 or toll free: 888-725-7225

Site Features

The first phase of the York River Water Trail formally opens this spring with installation of educational kiosks at public landings along the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers. These are considered *tier one sites*, offering refuge to those who need to stop and rest or seek shelter during a storm. Ultimately, more than 100 river miles spanning fresh, upland reaches to wide open estuaries will be connected by signage, kiosks, and in some cases, a finger dock to encourage paddlers to tie up and take in the local landscape.

Early installations at VDGIF public landings are impressive. The spa-



The Algonquin Trace

Summer 2002

- 1. Lester Manor Landing
- 2. Aylett Landing
- 3. Melrose Landing
- 4. Waterfence Landing
- 5. West Point Landing (Glass Island)

Fall 2002

- 6. Tanyard Landing
- 7. Croaker Landing
- 8. Gloucester Point Landing

CBNERRS (Future) 2003

Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System

- 9. Taskinas Creek
- 10. Goodwin Islands

Note: Additional private access sites will be added in 2003-2004.



Heather Willis



Billy Mills

Information Kiosks

Every aspect of the kiosk structure is significant:

- ◆ The copper roofing reminds us of its use as the currency of choice among Algonquin tribes paying tribute to temple priests. Copper was acquired through trade with the tribes of the Piedmont region.
- ◆ The roof of the kiosk imitates an Algonquin longhouse, a typical family dwelling of the Woodland period.
- ◆ The kiosk stands 6 feet tall to offer shelter during a rainstorm or shade on a hot day.

cious structures were built by AmeriCorps teams and community volunteers, and installed by local boy scouts and girl scouts.

Kiosks are prominently visible from the water, as well as accessible to those coming by land. Information is presented in the form of signs and maps, and via an electronic audio-messaging system built into the roof.

At the push of a button, a visitor will step back in time to learn how to interpret Algonquin elements in the nearby landscape. A second button shares information about the habitats, calls, and siting tips to appreciate bird life on the river.

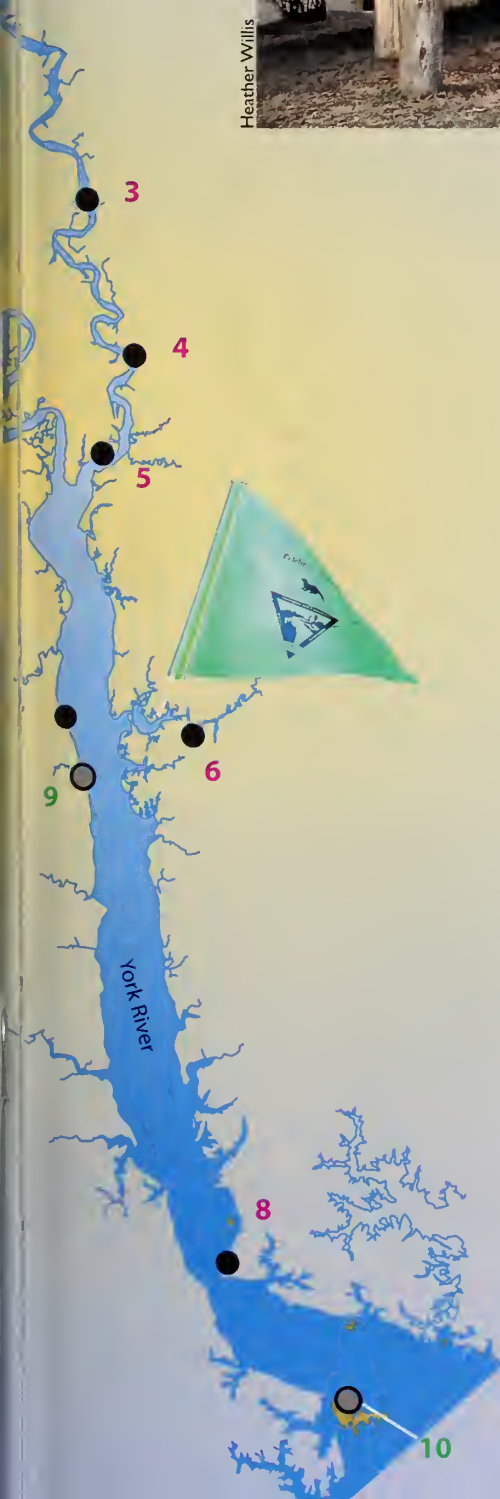
It is hoped that even landlubbers who choose to travel the new *Virginia Coastal Birding Trail* by car will discover the user-friendly attributes of the water trail and be enticed to return in a boat.

Subsequent phases of the water trail will build upon these stopover points and incorporate opportunities to explore and camp. Expanding beyond the upland locations and moving into the York River proper, these *second-tier sites* will feature an

Above: Copper-roofed information kiosks mounted on stripped cedar posts exhibit navigation maps and safe boating tips, as well as electronic messages that interpret the river landscape, native wildlife and vegetation, and cultural history. Right: The closeness and proximity of the river landscape in the upper reaches of both rivers is ideal for observing wildlife.



Dwight Dyke





Boating Safety & Stewardship

- ◆ **Paddle and Boat Safely:** File a float plan with a responsible friend before departing on your trip. Never mix boating and alcohol or drugs. Know your fuel and energy limits. Obey all boating laws.
- ◆ **Use Proper Safety Equipment:** Effective in 1994, all boats and canoes / kayaks must contain a personal flotation device for each occupant. Throw-type cushions are no longer acceptable as life-saving devices. Carry a compass and a waterproof map on board.
- ◆ **Stay Alert:** Keep an eye on the weather, wind, river conditions, and especially, the activities of others sharing the river. Consult a tide chart before you put in.
- ◆ **Sanitation:** Carry your own personal sanitation device or holder for waste and properly dispose of later—not on the river system.
- ◆ **Litter:** Never litter, and if you see trash on the river, collect it when safe to do so, and dispose of it properly later.
- ◆ **Respect Others:** Power boaters, canoeists, kayakers, fishermen, and watermen all use the river each day. Be respectful of everyone else—we all share the rivers in common trust.

For additional safety tips and information about state boating laws, visit the Department's Boating Program at: www.dgif.state.va.us/boating.

interpretive trailhead exhibit guiding visitors to a land-based connector—a hiking or biking trail (some with bikes provided by advance, key access)—or a walk-out to a motor vehicle trail.

Tier three sites offer the added element of tent camping under the stars, complete with a fire ring, se-

curely stored firewood, a privy or composting toilet, and trash receptacle. Camp sites will be installed and maintained on a minimal footprint of land, in keeping with the tradition of wilderness camping, and will require advance reservation for use.

In addition to state-owned public landings, shoreline sites on private

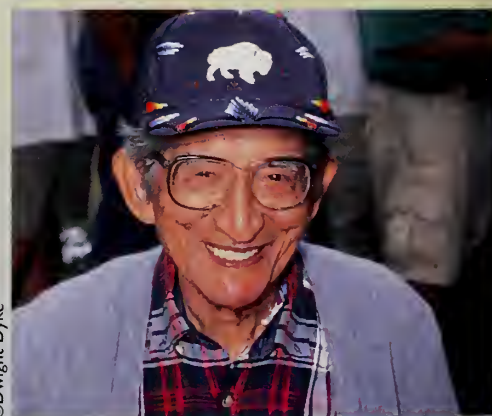


Local Boy Scouts in Aylett have constructed and installed numerous duck nesting boxes on the Mattaponi River at Zoar State Forest.



Local outfitter Garrie Rouse of Mattaponi Canoe and Kayak operates from the small village of Aylett, on the Mattaponi River and adjacent to Zoar State Forest.

lands and private campground facilities are envisioned as part of the Algonquin Trace. Several holdings in the *Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System* will become key attractions for small-powered craft such as jonboats. The research sites are particularly noteworthy for their ecological importance and resident bird populations. Unlike other sites along the trail, however, some of the reserves will come with specific access limitations.



One-hundred-and-one-year-old Pamunkey Chief Tecumseh Deerfoot Cook enjoys a celebratory luncheon at the dedication of the water trail in 2001 at the Pamunkey Indian Reservation.



©Dwight Dyke

Tourism Connections

What's particularly exciting about the trail network is the promise it holds for linking tourist destinations in the Middle Peninsula. It is hoped that visitors will be delightfully intrigued by the rural flavor of the area, the Bed and Breakfasts, the local shops, and the cultural artifacts, and decide to spend more time here. As such, the water trail becomes a viable economic driver, not only locally but also for nearby Yorktown and Jamestown.

The lower Pamunkey is ablaze with color in late fall afternoons. The marshes seem to almost call you in to stop and take a closer look.

Below: The Pamunkey Indian tribe has maintained its fish hatchery on the banks of the Pamunkey River since 1918.

One example of how the York River Water Trail hopes to capitalize on its proximity to Jamestown is via a link to a driving tour that follows the *Captain John Smith Capture Route* where Smith was forced to march in 1607 across the lower peninsulas. The driving tour leads to a water trail node and will be featured in the

new trail map series (see sidebar). Other destinations that offer excellent companion features to the water trail are the existing museums and fish hatcheries on the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Indian Reservations, and the new cultural centers of the Rappahannock and Upper Mattaponi Indians.

According to Dan Kavanagh, director of the region's planning district commission, "The water trail is a great way to raise awareness about the unique beauty and culture of the Middle Peninsula. Rarely does a visitor find this depth of American history and culture intact. And it's right here, amid the unparalleled beauty of our coastal marshes and tidal rivers."

Trail planners agree. They view the water trail as the backbone supporting the region's disparate, but compelling attractions that pay tribute to the very earliest history of our nation. They intend to showcase the cultural, historical, and natural treasures of the entire York River basin from a fresh perspective, while offering paddlers and small boat operators new options to explore and watch wildlife off the beaten path. □

Sally Mills edits the Virginia Marine Resource Bulletin for Virginia Sea Grant at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Virginia Sea Grant supports the York River Water Trail and other initiatives that build and sustain vibrant coastal communities.



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Additional Information

A series of five, river strip maps: the Lower Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Canoe Guide, printed in full color and on waterproof paper,

is available from MPRA for \$17.00, including shipping. The map sets provide valuable interpretive information describing 75 miles of river habitats, wildlife, and history. For more information contact the MPRA at (804) 769-0841, or visit online at: www.MPRA.org.



MPRA's York River Water Trail Project Partners and Sponsors

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Robins Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Ellis B. Olsson Memorial Foundation, Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Virginia, AmeriCorps/NCCC, Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, and Virginia Sea Grant.

continued from page 14

A wildfire is just what its name implies: a fire that runs "wild," raging out of control, made more unpredictable by the vagaries of the weather. Occasionally wildfires occur when lightning provides a spark to ignite dry leaves or other organic matter. This is one of nature's oldest phenomena and ensures the perpetuation of biological change in the environment. In Virginia, however, 99 percent of wildfires are caused by people, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars to control. Annually, about 1,000 fires burn 4,000 acres of forest land.

Many wildfires tend to occur in early spring and fall when conditions are ripe for high fire danger: low humidity and dry winds, combined with warm temperatures and dry material or very little green vegetation on the ground. Because of these conditions, it is not uncommon for a wildfire to burn with such feverish intensity that the flames reach well up into the canopy or upper layers of a forest, destroying everything within its path, including timber, wildlife



Prescribed fire helps to clear away undesirable plant species and leaves larger trees intact.

habitat, and the protective covering on the forest floor that prevents erosion. An unwary homeowner or landowner who decides to burn an unattractive pile of leaves or brush when fire danger is high may be in for quite a surprise at how easily even a small fire can escape and become much larger, menacing, and potentially catastrophic.

A prescribed fire, in contrast, is the land manager's equivalent to a doctor's prescription: a custom-designed plan to fit a particular situation or need. Weather is a crucial factor in determining when and how a prescribed burn is done, and the burn is conducted only when wind, temperature, and humidity conditions are favorable for keeping the fire under control. Prescribed fires burn with lower intensity and heat than wildfires, and are, therefore, intended to cause much less damage.

Prescription for Fire

Just as a suburban homeowner might prepare a seedbed for a garden by removing the grass in the yard and working up the soil beneath it, a rural landowner uses prescribed fire to prepare an area for the management that will come next. For example, the goal in a woodland setting might be to remove the competition for growing space among the tree species present.



Here, a prescribed burn would creep across the forest floor, clearing away the undesirable species, but leaving the crop trees intact. Another example is a hayfield or pasture where the grass has built up a degree of thatch that can crowd out new grass seeds from germinating. A prescribed burn through the field helps to eliminate the thatch and return nutrients to the soil.

One of the most important uses of a prescribed burn, particularly in western states, is to reduce the amount of hazardous fuels on the ground. When fire is deliberately excluded from an area for many years, dead vegetation and other organic debris accumulates. This "fuel loading" on the ground can be a dangerous situation, because such conditions make it much more likely that when a natural fire finally does occur, it will be a hot, intense burn that will cause more damage than a low-intensity, planned burn. In the east, prescribed fire is commonly used in areas where a significant weather event like a summer hurricane or a winter ice storm has cast many branches and other leafy material onto the forest floor. Unattended, this fuel can dry out and increase the likelihood of wildfire. A prescribed burn circumvents this risk by removing the fuel on the ground.

Prescribed fire in Virginia has an excellent track record. Our forest industry and many private landowners frequently use fire as site preparation for pine management. After a harvest or clearcut, the site is burned to prepare a bed for planting pine seedlings. Prescribed fire is also used to keep open lands open, which helps sustain species like quail and songbirds that require grassland areas to survive.

Essential Ingredients

At least three key ingredients must be available for a prescription fire to burn correctly: fuel, oxygen, and heat. The fuel can be the thatch in the grass or the branches on the ground, as described above. A heat source is needed to ignite the fuel, and oxygen is needed for the combustion or rapid oxidation to continue. If any one of these three elements is removed, a fire cannot exist. Land managers can, therefore, influence the outcome of a fire by manipulating the elements to their best advantage. They use instruments that measure humidity in the air, which can affect how well the fuel will burn. They take into consideration the wind speed and wind direction, as well as the topography of the land, because fire behaves differently when it travels up or down a slope than across a flat field.

Fire lines or fire breaks must surround the area to be burned. A fire line is a wide strip or border of bare soil containing no fuel such as dead leaves and other plant litter; the line protects adjacent areas from being burned accidentally. For example, a gravel driveway might be used as a fire break between two fields. Or, in a heavily wooded area, workers construct a fire line by scraping away the vegetation down to bare soil with specially designed, sharp bladed fire rakes. Oftentimes a fire line is used as a starting point to begin a fire and provide it with a deliberate direction from which to burn.



Virginia Burning Law

To protect life and property, Virginia enforces a 4:00 p.m. burning law from February 15 through April 30. The law states that during this time period each year, which is referred to as *fire season*, no burning may occur in or within 300 feet of woodland, brushland, or fields that contain dry grass or other flammable material except between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight.

Because fire can quickly get out of hand, prescribed burning should be left to the professionals.





Burning on Your Property

In order to conduct a prescribed fire on your property, you must have a burn plan on hand and must also notify the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) and your local sheriff's office that a burn will take place. To help improve your chances for a quality burn, DOF offers a three-day certification course in which participants learn the correct techniques for applying prescribed fire. To learn more about the course, contact Fred Turck, Forest Protection Coordinator, at the Virginia Department of Forestry office in Waverly, (804) 834-2300.

Fire is neither all good nor all bad. It is simply powerful. In the proper place and time, with the right conditions, and under the direction of trained and

experienced professionals prescribed fire can be an indispensable method of land management and a very constructive technique for improving wildlife habitat.

Learning More

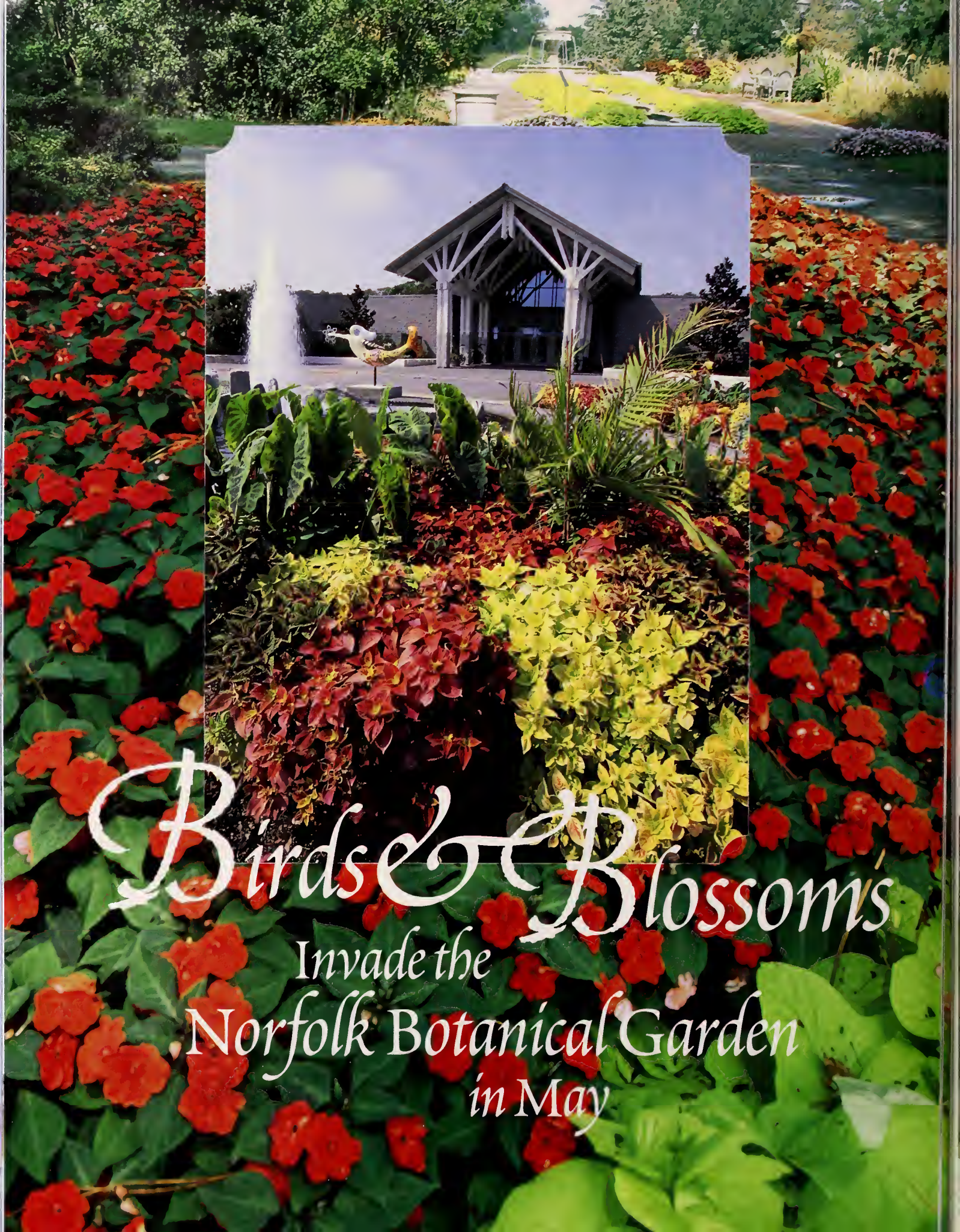
A Virtual Tour of the Forest: Teacher's Guide, a 50-page booklet and accompanying CD, are available from the Virginia Department of Forestry as a supplement to the Project Learning Tree (PLT) program. The guide includes sections on forests, harvesting trees, fire, water quality, and more. Look for the guide at the Forestry Web Store,

The northern bobwhite quail (*Colinus virginianus*) benefits from the use of prescribed burning. Fire helps to create open areas that were shaded from sunlight, which then promotes new growth.

www.dof.state.va.us, visit Virginia PLT at www.cnr.vt.edu/plt/, or call the DOF headquarters in Charlottesville at (434) 977-6555 for additional details. □

Carol Heiser is a Wildlife Habitat Education Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.





Birds & Blossoms

*Invade the
Norfolk Botanical Garden
in May*

by Marika Byrd

A beautiful, rather warm Friday, May 4, 2001, dawned as I departed Richmond for the Norfolk Botanical Garden's (NBG) first Birds & Blossoms Spring Festival. There I joined co-workers from the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), co-sponsors for the Songbird Weekend event.

Excitement filled the air as humans and wildlife were abundant among the picturesque plants, shrubs, and trees situated in the over 24 theme gardens; over 95 species of birds and wildlife were running or swimming around the Garden environs.

Field Trips for Wildlife Watchers

The first stop was the Visitor Center Registration Desk to gather the welcome packet, a festival souvenir, and check on the scheduling of events I'd like to attend.

In addition to tours of the Norfolk Botanical Garden and a nature tour on Lake Whitehurst, numerous field trips to public facilities in the Tidewater area were slated. (Unfortunately, working at the event prevented me from going on any of the field trips.)

Back Bay National Wildlife

Refuge/False Cape State Park has over 8,000 acres. A tram ride takes you on the first leg of the tour into the interior of the refuge. Once at the park you depart the tram and a guide points out areas of interest as you traverse the marked nature trails; the return trip to the parking area is via the beach on a large-wheeled beach vehicle. Marsh and sedge wrens, bald eagles, osprey, brown pelicans, and possibly late winter waterfowl like red-breasted mergansers swarm about.

First Landing State Park has a mostly open sandy beach and a maritime, live oak forest of mixed hardwoods/pine, with freshwater marshes and ponds, and a large brackish bay on the southeast side of the park. Vireos, warblers, and a wide range of shore birds and loons are found here.

Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge contains 107,000 acres of wooded wetland. Along the Jericho Ditch one sees up to 30 species of spring migrant warblers and vireos, yellow-billed cuckoos, grosbeaks, and flycatchers. You may also see a black bear, bobcat, or river otter.

Craney Island (Portsmouth) is a man-made peninsula jutting into the Hampton Roads Harbor, containing three large impoundment areas. Migrant waterfowl, shorebirds, and ducks abound.

Visitors to the Norfolk Botanical Garden will find the month of May a wonderful time to view a vast array of birds, like the Carolina chickadee (*Parus carolinensis*) and to soak up the beauty of the flowers, shrubs, and trees.

Weyanoke Sanctuary is owned by The Nature Conservancy of Virginia and is managed by the Cape Henry Audubon Society. Weyanoke Sanctuary contains pine woodlands, mixed hardwoods, and a small meadow that provides habitat for warblers, woodpeckers, and thrushes.

The Hermitage, owned by the City of Norfolk, has mixed hardwoods, pine woodlands, scrubby undergrowth, open lawn and river shoreline, and marshes. Spring birds you might detect here include shore-



©Maslowski Photo



©Dwight Dyke





There are numerous field trips around the Tidewater area offered during the Birds & Blossoms weekend. Wildlife watchers can explore places like First Landing State Park (top) or relax at the Norfolk Botanical Garden (above).

birds, gulls, orioles, tanagers, and sparrows.

Owl Prowl is a lively night walk to look for screech, barred, and great horned owls.

The Kayak Tour lets participants

paddle on Lake Whitehurst, a freshwater habitat that borders the Garden on three sides.

Inside the Garden Itself

I rode the "Critter Crawler" (a rubber tire train) around the Garden periphery as the driver provided an educational narration. There was more than I could see in one day. The Garden holds many plants with healing properties; a typical 1700s and 1800s garden grows herbs that release their spicy essence into the air. The rose aficionados can linger to their hearts content and view over 4,000 roses from over 250 varieties. The breathtaking expanse of azaleas, camellias, irises, and rhododendrons—in pallets of beautiful color—are just a few of the spring blooms found in the Garden.

Various seminars and workshops about wildlife watching, plants, attracting wildlife, and using wild edibles were available throughout the festival.

The "Nature on the Lake Boat Tour" is a must if you wonder what life is like along the canal and Lake Whitehurst. The narrator showed many samples of the diverse aquatic life. Imagine seeing bullfrog tadpoles, damselfly and dragonfly larvae, whirligig beetles, mosquito fish, and Spirogyra algae up close and personal.

Pull out your binoculars (small ones are loaned) to see the double-crested cormorants, painted and

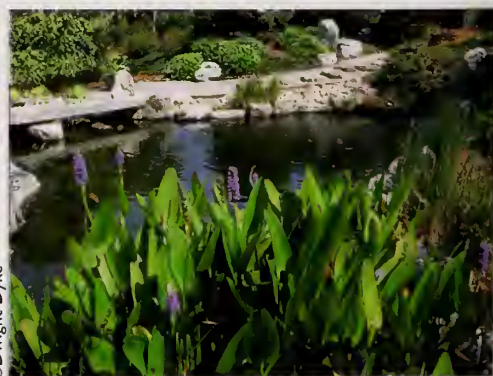


Visitors to the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge are often treated to sightings of a black bear, raccoon, or even an elusive, bobcat (*Lynx rufus*).

red-bellied turtles, an osprey nest, great blue herons, and mallards in their natural habitats.

New for 2002

The NBG and VDGIF welcome the partnership of The Nature Conservancy of Virginia (TNC) for the 2nd Annual Birds & Blossoms—A Weekend for Birders and Naturalists. TNC will provide information about their projects in southeastern Virginia during their annual meeting and through field trips to Northwest River Park, North Landing River, Alton's Creek, Pocaty River,



and the Eastern Shore," according to Sue Thrash, Public Relations Coordinator for the Garden.

Ms. Thrash indicates that, "On Saturday evening, participants will have the opportunity to meet Dr. William Sladen, Director of Environmental Studies at Arlie Conference Center and one of the men behind the movie, *Fly Away Home*. Dr. Sladen will share his perspective on Arlie's unique and leading edge projects with large waterfowl that have gained both national and international attention." This event is open to the public, with reservations required.

Mary Kathryn van Eerden, Green Sea Program Director, indicates, "The Birds & Blossoms Festival is a perfect platform for The Nature Conservancy of Virginia's annual meeting. Partnering with the Nor-

©Dwight Dyke



on the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail.

"This program is the perfect way to get people to experience the Garden—not only for our beautiful landscape, but to learn and experience nature through the many workshops and activities we offer," said Don Buma, Executive Director of the Norfolk Botanical Garden.

David Whitehurst, VDGIF Director of the Wildlife Diversity Division, says, "Over the last 15 years, wildlife watching has been the most rapidly growing, outdoor recreational activity in the United States. Birding and wildlife festivals, such as the Norfolk Botanical Garden's Birds & Blossoms Weekend, enhance the public's appreciation for and understanding of the valuable wildlife resources and increases nature tourism for the area."

For more information contact the Norfolk Botanical Garden, 6700 Azalea Garden Road, Norfolk, VA 23418-5337, 757/441-5838 or look on the Garden's Web site at www.virginiagarden.org/specialevents.htm

Marika Byrd is office manager for and a frequent contributor to Virginia Wildlife. She is also a crossword puzzle buff and annually creates one for this magazine.



Whether it's a barred owl (*Strix varia*) or majestic bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), it's always a good idea to keep your eyes open and binoculars ready while attending the Birds & Blossoms event.

folk Botanical Garden [and VDGIF] gives us a unique opportunity to inform members and potential new supporters alike about our conservation mission and to showcase some of our most notable accomplishments."

Opportunities Galore for Wildlife Enthusiasts

There are so many activities slated for 2002 that I cannot do the festival justice in this limited space. This is an adventure not to be missed. So mark your calendars for May 2-5, 2002, gather a group, and go enjoy a day or two among the flora, fauna, and local natural areas—many of which are



©Joe McDonald



Journal

VDGIF 2002 Calendar of Events

May 2-5: *Birds & Blossoms*, Norfolk Botanical Garden. For information call (757) 441-5838.

August 2-4: *Mother & Daughter Event*, Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center, Appomattox, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351.

September 7: *Women in the Outdoors*, Izaak Walton League, Centreville, Va. For information, contact Linda Layser at (703) 425-6665 or rglayser@msn.com.

September 13-15: *Wilderness Survival Weekend*, Lake Robertson, Lexington, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351.

September 21: *Virginia Outdoors Day*, Belle Isle State Park, Warsaw, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351.

October 18-20: *Virginia Outdoors Weekend*, Westmoreland State Park, Montross, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351.

December 13-14: *Beyond BOW Women's Deer Hunt*, York River State Park, Williamsburg, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351. □

Nature's Image 2002 Photography Workshops

Calling all shutterbugs. Here is your chance to learn more about photography, and how to fine-tune your picture-taking talents by participating in the 8th season of the Nature's Image Photography Field Workshops, hosted by award win-

ning outdoor and wildlife photographers Bill and Linda Lane.

This year's workshops will be held throughout Virginia and locations include Westmoreland State Park, on the Potomac River; Port Isabel Island, on Virginia's beautiful Eastern Shore; Hungry Mother and Douthat State Parks, for you mountain lovers; and False Cape State Park, which is nestled between Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and North Carolina's Outer Banks. Workshops will cover the art of design, composition, working with natural light, and experimenting with creative uses of equipment, such as filters, diffusers, reflectors, and a variety of tripods. Lighting, color, close-up macro photography, along with learning how to make your camera work for you will be featured. The goal of each workshop is to make photography easy, fun, and gratifying, while taking you to your next level of learning.

The Lanes cater to photographers of all experience levels realizing that we all have something to learn and share. Group sizes are kept small to allow for lots of one-on-one instruction, with many of the workshop activities conducted in the field. They are also known for offering participants a comfortable atmosphere and great home cooked meals, which help foster the exchange of ideas, questions, and camaraderie among all those who participate. Most importantly, they prove that it's not the equipment that makes the picture, but the person behind the lens.

So allow yourself a weekend getaway at one of Virginia's fine state parks or other areas of interest, and have a "picture perfect" time. For

more information and a complete list of this year's photography workshops call the Lanes at (804) 883-7740 or check their Web site at: www.lanephotoworkshops.com.



written and illustrated
by Jennifer Worrell

Man That's Cold

Game wardens are known to pop up in the strangest places. This was the case with Game Warden B. I. Bell, who received a call about a poaching hot spot in his area where people were shooting waterfowl out



of season. As the land was vast and marshy there were no apparent hiding places that would allow him to catch the poachers in the act. Suddenly, Bell spied an old refrigerator that had been left in the marsh and proceeded to crawl up next to it. From the looks of it, the old refrigerator had been used for target practice and was full of holes, making it easy to see the perpetrators as they approached. Eventually, the poachers finished hunting and came back across the marsh with an arm full of illegal geese.

Bell popped out from behind the refrigerator hollering. "State game warden, drop your guns!"

The men, surprised and confused, dropped everything and complied. Bell later heard them swear that next time they would shoot any old discarded refrigerators on sight. Shortly thereafter, Bell noticed that his goose hunting constituents had moved his "poachers blind" out of the marsh. □

Going Hog Wild

Game Warden Gerald Warwick, from Isle of Wight, received a tip from a local farmer that hunters were trespassing on his property. Barwick had another warden drop him off on the land one night to run surveillance. He hid under an old tractor by a fence to wait for the potential poachers.

Almost immediately, Barwick heard an animal rustling in the leaves nearby. He made some quiet sounds to frighten the animal away without revealing his hiding place. The creature had other ideas and slipped closer.

Barwick assumed the animal to be an opossum or raccoon, but early daylight revealed it to be a pig. Apparently delighted by the sight of a game warden hiding under a tractor, the pig began to lovingly nudge Barwick's ear.

As the amorous hog nuzzled him on one side, Barwick saw the trespassers run into the woods. He nudged the pig on the nose. It backed away, then ran to the other



side of the tractor and began nibbling his other ear! Barwick tapped the pig on the snout again, this time twice as hard. Finally, it backed up and ambled into the bushes. Barwick was able to sneak out from beneath his tractor and nab the trespassers before everything went "hog wild." □

Free Fishing Days Date Correction

The Free Fishing Days listed in the 2001/2002 *Virginia Wildlife* Calendar (June 7, 8, and 9) are incorrect. The correct dates are May 31–June 2, 2002. We regret the error. □

Volunteer Hunter Education Instructors Aim to Please

by Robert S. Korpanty, P.E.
Hunter Education Instructor,
Region 1

Recently, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries issued new instructor manuals to all volunteer Hunter Education instructors. After reviewing the new manuals, a number of instructors from Tidewater, under the guidance of Virginia Game Warden Lieutenant Jon Ober, helped to develop additional training outlines and produced a state-of-the-art computer presentation of

Left to right: Jim Stankan, President of the Lafayette Gun Club and Cindy Stroud of the Tidewater Chapter of the Friends of the NRA, presents Bob Korpanty a volunteer Hunter Education instructor with a check for \$300 for support to the Hunter Education Program.

the course for new students. This presentation, along with other enhancements, including practical exercises in outdoor ethics, map/compass reading, and game tracking were included in the course.

Hunter Education volunteers contacted the National Rifle Association (NRA) and the Lafayette Gun Club for financial support to implement the enhancements contained in the new course. The Friends of the NRA quickly responded with a \$300 grant to purchase and provide students with the hunter ethics handbook entitled "Beyond Fair Chase." In addition, the Lafayette Gun Club matched the NRA Foundation's grant to provide graduates with a blaze orange hat upon completion of the Hunter Education course. □

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On The Water

by Jim Crosby, Region 4 Boater Education Coordinator

The Security of Checklists

It's that time of year when boaters begin thinking of spring and what lies ahead for the boating season. That time of the year when resurrection of the boat from its winter dormancy rises to the top of the "to do" list.

Speaking of lists, you just can't beat a good checklist when it comes to multiple tasks that must be followed in sequence for the safety of your property and the people using it. Everybody in the world knows that aircraft pilots use checklists for pre-flight, pre-takeoffs, pre-landings and everything that happens in and around the airplane.

Watercraft pilots could learn a lot from their aircraft pilot friends. Everyone knows that once you leave the ground, life is dependent on the aircraft functioning as expected, without surprises. The same can be said for the watercraft, once it leaves the dock.

By developing and using checklists boaters could save thousands of dollars in property damage or loss, and reduce injuries and fatalities significantly. For example, I don't know any boater who hasn't, at least once, launched a vessel without placing the plug in the hull drain—a simple task that can so easily be forgotten without a pre-launch checklist. I even tried to launch my boat without removing the tie-down straps. For a moment, I couldn't figure out why the trailer floated and would not sink away from the boat. Yes, I really did that!

I also forgot to latch the trailer hitch to the ball on my vehicle once, went over a bump and it jumped off. Fortunately, the lapse in memory didn't include forgetting to cross the safety chains. The tongue of the trailer was caught in the crossed chains

have accomplished and what is left to do following the distraction.

May I be ever so bold as to recommend you develop your own checklists and incorporate them in all of your boat operations! When you make this decision, you will find lots of help. Many owner manuals come with checklists. Lots of publications covering boat operations offer suggested checklists. You can set back with a notebook and pencil and make your own checklist while visualizing the steps that must be accomplished in a given task. Many resource agencies have checklists available, such as the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

However you develop your checklist, we can take another lesson from our flying friends. They type them out, step by step and put them in plastic covers to protect them. Some even place them in plastic jackets that fit into a plastic binder to handle the wear and tear of multiple uses.

Let's consider the appropriate checklists for a trailer-borne watercraft:

1. A Pre-Towing & Hook-up Checklist.
2. A Pre-Launch & Launch Checklist.
3. A Pre-Underway Checklist.
4. A Retrieval & Pre-Towing Checklist.

Let's get to work and produce our own checklists for improved safety and lots more fun "on the water" without mishap! □



and allowed me time to pull off the road and stop safely without a mishap.

Those two instances taught me the need to develop checklists for each phase of hooking up, launching, and operating my boat. Skeptics always say, "Yes, I use a checklist. It's in my head and becomes a part of my routine for launching." Yes, that works most of the time. But when you are distracted by something or someone during the process is when you forget that one item so necessary for the smooth performance of that particular operation. You can fully recover from a distraction when you have an actual checklist in hand—a physical checklist in hand that you can review to see what you

RECIPES

by Joan Cone

How About A Turkey Pot Pie?

Your spring gobbler is large enough for double duty—as roast turkey plus other creative dishes. Everyone relishes a good turkey pot pie.

Do not discard the turkey carcass—it's your foundation for excellent soup. That comes later. Now let us make our pot pie.

Menu

Brie With Almonds

Turkey Pot Pie

Mexican Spinach Salad

Fresh Lemon Dessert Sauce

Brie With Almonds

(For microwave)

- 4 ounces Brie cheese
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons blanched, sliced almonds
- Cracker assortment

Place cheese on micro-safe serving plate about 1½-inches larger all around than cheese. Combine butter and almonds in a 1 cup glass measure and microwave on HIGH power, stirring once, until almonds are toasted, 3 to 4 minutes. Spoon almond mixture over cheese and microwave on MEDIUM HIGH power (70%) until cheese is hot throughout, 45 seconds to 1½ minutes. Serve as a spread with crackers. Serves 4 to 6.

Turkey Pot Pie

- 1 package (15 ounces) Pillsbury Refrigerated Pie Crusts
- ⅓ cup butter or margarine
- ⅓ cup chopped onion
- ⅓ cup flour
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup turkey or chicken broth
- ¾ cup milk
- 3 cups shredded turkey
- 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables, thawed

Preheat oven to 425° F. Prepare 1 pie crust as directed on package. Melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook 2 minutes or until tender. Add flour, salt and pepper and stir until well blended. Gradually stir in broth and milk, cooking and stirring until bubbly and thickened. Add turkey and mixed vegetables and mix well. Remove from heat. Spoon turkey mixture into a 2-quart casserole. Top with crust and seal edges to casserole. Cut slits in several places on crust. Bake at 425° F. for 30 to 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

Mexican Spinach Salad

- 1 package fresh spinach, washed and well-drained
- ½ of an 8 ounce package of Pepperidge Farm Dressing (crumbled)
- 8 slices bacon, fried crisp and crumbled
- 4 hard boiled eggs
- Mexican Dressing

Wash spinach and dry well. Mix remaining ingredients and toss with Mexican Dressing.

Mexican Dressing

Make and refrigerate this dressing 24 hours before you plan to use it.

- 1 medium onion, chopped fine
- ⅔ cup sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 heaping teaspoon celery seed
- 3 tablespoons prepared mustard
- ½ cup vinegar
- ½ cup salad oil

In a medium bowl add all ingredients and beat with a rotary beater. Refrigerate and toss with spinach mixture just before serving. Serves 4 to 6.

Fresh Lemon Dessert Sauce

(For microwave)

- 1 cup water
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- Grated peel of ½ lemon
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, softened

In a 4-cup glass measure, gradually stir water into sugar and cornstarch. Add lemon peel, juice, and butter. Microwave, uncovered, on HIGH power for 1½ minutes. Stir well. Cook 2 minutes longer until mixture boils and thickens, stirring twice. Cool 3 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve warm. Makes about 1¼ cups. Serve over pound cake, gingerbread, or fresh fruit compote. □



©Dwight Dyke



Wild Backyard

story and photos by Marlene A. Condon



Flowering Dogwood

The flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) is Virginia's state tree and flower. This wonderful landscaping and wildlife plant is abundantly grown in city and suburban yards, but it also occurs naturally in the forests of our countryside. When the dogwood trees bloom in April, Virginia becomes a scenic delight!

The more-natural color of the prominent flower bracts is white, but there are several varieties of dogwoods. Rubra has pink bracts and is widely available at nurseries. Thus pink-blooming dogwoods are almost as commonly seen in yards as the white-blooming varieties.

However, although many folks mistakenly believe the white or pink bracts are the flowers, the actual or "true" dogwood flowers are tiny. They are produced in dense, crowd-


ed heads at the center of the showy bracts.

The flowering dogwood is an attractive tree in the fall, too. Its leaves take on a beautiful red coloring, especially when planted in full sun.

In addition to providing such an abundance of ornamental value for people, flowering dogwood serves wildlife equally well. Numerous species of songbirds, game birds, and waterfowl partake of the bright-red fruits that cover the trees in early fall. Many mammals also eat the fruit, and some eat the twigs and foliage of dogwood as well, making this tree an all-around smorgasbord for wildlife.

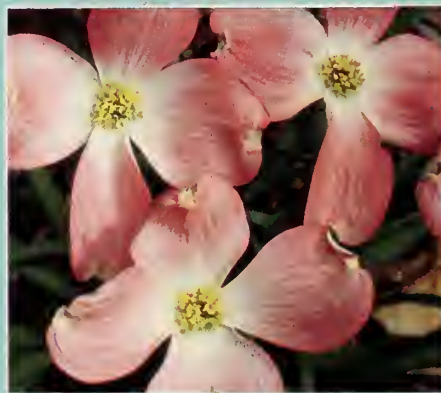
Year-round songbird residents that you might attract to your dogwood are the eastern bluebird, northern cardinal, American robin,

northern mockingbird, and American crow. Migratory species, such as the brown thrasher, gray catbird, and red-eyed vireo, might eat some of the scarlet fruits before heading south for the winter. If you live in the country, you could see ruffed grouse or wild turkey coming by for a visit. White-tailed deer will probably nibble on the twigs and foliage, while black bears, raccoons, and eastern chipmunks will want a fruit snack.

Dogwoods are lovely, small trees that can be fit into almost any yard, so do consider growing one for wildlife as well as for your own enjoyment. Then in fall you will very likely see our state bird—the northern cardinal—eating matching-red berries in our state tree! 



The bracts of dogwood are often mistaken for the true flowers.



Pink-colored dogwoods are available at most commercial nurseries.

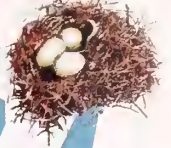


Dogwood fruits turn bright red in the fall and are eagerly consumed by mammals and birds.



story and illustration
by Spike Knuth

Naturally Wild



Smallmouth Bass

Micropterus dolomieu

Smallmouth bass were introduced into Virginia's Shenandoah River about 1854, from the Ohio River system of West Virginia. It thrived in its new habitat and expanded rapidly to other suitable streams, and anglers are reaping the benefits today. Often called the bronzeback, it normally does have a brownish or a bronze cast on its back, with vertical, dark olivaceous bars. However, it may come in a variety of shades, colors, and markings, dependent on the types of water it lives in. Some may be pale green, others dark green, and some almost black. Some will show variations of vertical bars, blotches, or radiating stripes on their gill covers and cheeks. The upper jaw of the smallmouth does not extend beyond its eye as it does on the largemouth bass, hence the name smallmouth. Its dorsal fin has a very shallow notch between the spiny and soft-rayed portion.

Smallmouth do best in clear, cool water habitats that have currents, although some research indicates it has temperature tolerances almost identical to the largemouth. Nevertheless, it is found mainly in the cooler, faster water of rivers and large streams, or the cool, deep water of certain reservoirs. It is intolerant of polluted or silty waters and favors more acidic waters. Habitat-wise, it is usually associated with rocky ledges,

gravel bars, or sandy bottoms, although in some habitats it will seek out hiding places near logs or downed trees. Among its favorite foods are crayfish, hellgrammites, mayfly nymphs, stoneflies, certain molluscs, and small fishes, such as darters, daces, sculpins, shiners, chubs, and madtoms.

River smallmouth spawn around late April into early June when water temperatures reach the mid-60s. Like other members of the sunfish family, the males fan out circular nests in 2-4 feet of water. When the nest is ready, a smallmouth male coaxes a ripe female into the nest area to spawn. Up to three females may spawn in a single nest, which may contain up to 20,000 eggs, but frequently as few as 200. The female is then chased off and the male guards the nest and eggs vigorously. Depending on temperatures, the eggs hatch within a week or so. The fry leave the nest area and seek out aquatic vegetation along the shore to

hide in until able to swim more quickly. In lakes, smallmouth will spawn in shoal areas where there is some kind of wave or other moving water action. Smallmouth growth in smaller, fast-moving streams is normally slower than in large rivers or lakes. Adequate food and the type available, and the type of water, its temperature and current, are factors that affect fish sizes.

Its natural range covers southern Canada, the Great Lakes Region, the Midwest, and east to New England. It has gradually extended its range to where it now includes most southern and western states. Some top waters in Virginia include the James, Shenandoah, Upper Rappahannock, New, Rivanna, Willis, Slate, and Nottoway Rivers, and Philpott, Smith Mountain, Claytor, and South Holston Reservoirs. □



VIRGINIA WILDLIFE 2002 Annual Photography Contest



©Marie Majorov

Picture it! By entering this year's *Virginia Wildlife* magazine's 2002 Photography Contest you could find your photograph published in one of the best wildlife magazines in the country.

This year's contest will have three categories for you to enter, Birds of a Feather, Cold and Clammy Critters, and Fantastic Flowers. First and second place winners in each category will receive prizes donated by the Eastman Kodak Company. Third place winners will receive prizes from Richmond Camera. On top of that, winners of the 2002 contest will have their photographs published in the January 2003 issue of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine for all to see.

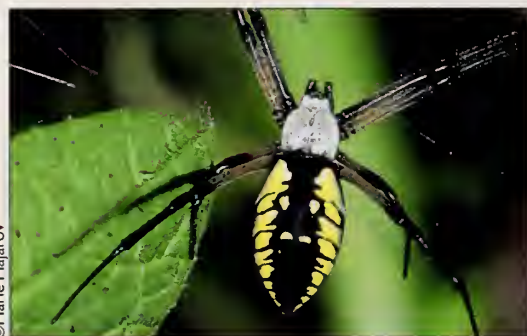
For additional information and contest rules send a self addressed, stamped envelope with 34 cents postage to: *Virginia Wildlife* Photography Contest, 4010 West Broad St, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104 or see our Web site at www.dgif.state.va.us. Deadline for contest submissions is **October 25th, 2002**. Good luck and have fun.



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